

Legacy of Exploration:
OUR MEDIEVAL INHERITANCE
Spring 2006

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Leslie Donovan
OFFICE HOURS: Mon. 11:00-1:00, Thurs. 12:30-2:00, and by appointment
CONTACT INFO: University College 20 (Honors Center office),
277-4313 (has voice mail), ldonovan@unm.edu
WEBPAGES: Dr. Donovan's homepage – <http://www.unm.edu/~ldonovan/>
(For this course, under Current Courses, click on link to *Medieval Inheritance*)
Electronic Reserves, go to course page (see above) and click on E-Reserves button at top
Password = grendel
(Direct to E-Reserve page, <http://ereserves.unm.edu/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=3721>)

DESCRIPTION and OBJECTIVES:

When modern people think of the Middle Ages, they typically imagine a dark history full of famine and plague, ignorance and tyranny— a time when society and technology were backward, archaic, and irrelevant. Yet, such simplistic stereotypes misrepresent the rich, vibrant, energetic cultures of the western medieval culture. In this course, we will explore some of the ideas and expressions arising in the time between 500 and 1500 that have become integral parts of U.S. culture in the 21st century. Among other subjects, we will examine the medieval legacy of heroic epics, the quest for spiritual fulfillment, feminist thought, troubadour poetry, chivalric ethics, moral allegories, bawdy humor, and illuminated books. Through vigorous discussion, concentrated thinking, energetic writing and dynamic oral presentations, we will focus particularly on how medieval attitudes and traditions live on disguised, but still thriving, in contemporary U.S. consciousness.

TEXTS:

Dante Alighieri, *The Divine Comedy: Selected Cantos*, trans. Stanley Appelbaum
Beowulf, trans. Seamus Heaney (or any Modern English version in poetry)
Geoffrey Chaucer, *Selected Canterbury Tales*
Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies* (or any complete Modern English version)
Everyman and Other Miracle and Morality Plays, trans. James Jennings
Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, trans. J.R.R. Tolkien (or any Modern English version in poetry)
Eileen Power, *Medieval People*
Michael Harvey, *The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing*
Anne Thomson, *Critical Reasoning: A Practical Introduction*

GRADES:

Course requirements will earn up to 100 points distributed as follows:

Attendance	15 points
Participation	15 points
Electronic Discussion	10 points
Analytical Paper 1	10 points
Analytical Paper 2	10 points
Group Oral Presentation	10 points
Creative Research Project	10 points
Final Portfolio	20 points

Grading scale: A = 93-100 points CR = 70-92 points NC = 0-69 points

REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance (15% of total grade):

In order to get the most out of this advanced college experience, it is essential that you attend every class. A substantial amount of learning in Honors courses takes place in the classroom. If you don't come to class, you put your own education at a disadvantage and you deny others the opportunity of learning from what you have to contribute. In addition, no matter how many notes you get from classmates, material from class discussion that you miss may never be made up completely. Therefore, you will earn ½ point for every class you attend in full. Since we have 30 classes, if you attend every class, you will earn the maximum 15 possible points. Also be aware that no distinction will be made between excused and unexcused absences (see Policies #2).

You are also required to attend two academic lectures/events during the semester. To fulfill this part of your attendance requirement, you may attend any of the UHP lectures given throughout the semester (announcements will be posted on the UHP listserv and around the Honors Center) or any other public lecture on campus. After attending these lectures, write a brief summary (2-5 paragraphs) on each lecture and e-mail it to the entire class on our electronic discussion list (see section on electronic discussion below). Your lecture summary should include an explanation of what the lecture discussed, who gave the lecture, when and where the lecture took place, and your assessment of the value and importance of the lecture. Your summaries must be e-mailed no later than one week after the lecture took place to be counted toward your grade. If you submit only one lecture summary during the semester, two points will be deducted automatically from your attendance score. If you submit no lecture summaries, four points will be deducted automatically from your attendance score.

Participation (15% of total grade):

It is not only crucial that you attend class in order to gain the most from this educational experience, but it is equally important that you participate actively and regularly in class discussions and activities. To be able to participate effectively in class, you are expected to be well prepared for class discussion. This means you should not only read assignments, but think carefully about what you have read prior to our discussion of those assignments. It also means that, as with any other 3-credit college Honors course, to pass the course you should plan on spending a minimum of two hours for every hour you are in class or a total of at least five hours a week on class-related activities, such as reading assignments, researching presentations, interacting with each other through electronic discussion, drafting and revising papers, etc. However, to earn a high grade in an Honors course such as this, it is highly likely you will need to spend substantially more time than this minimum.

In addition, in Honors courses, effective class participation involves more than simply coming to class well prepared; it also requires you to share your ideas. While all students cannot express their ideas in class all the time, I expect you to contribute your thoughts as often as possible. All seriously considered views are equally valuable to our collective learning process. If, for whatever reason, you keep such ideas to yourself, then the collaborative educational exchange this class is meant to be becomes impossible. Voluntarily sharing your ideas in class in a respectful way during most class sessions will form a substantial portion of your participation score. To help you develop your skills for such an exchange of ideas, short in-class assignments, group exercises, freewrites, e-mail exercises, and other homework will be given frequently. The majority of these assignments should take about 15-30 minutes to complete. These assignments are designed to generate class discussion and to give you a place to start when analyzing our subject. They will not be graded or collected during class. Nevertheless, you are expected to perform such assignments to the best of your ability. If you miss class, you may not make up in-class activities.

Electronic Discussion (10% of total grade):

In addition to participating actively in regular class discussions, you will dialogue with each other throughout the semester on an electronic discussion list through your most frequently used e-mail account. You will be expected to make an average of two postings per week on this electronic discussion list on topics pertinent to our course for a total of 30 or more postings by the end of the semester. Individual postings will not receive points, but you will earn a score based on the quality and quantity of your total entries combined. For instance, a student who makes 30 entries, most of which contain thoughtful responses or questions about the course topic, will earn a higher score for electronic discussion than either a student who makes 20 thoughtful entries or a student who makes 50

less thoughtful or off-the-topic postings. Postings to our electronic discussion list must be made consistently throughout the term to earn a high score. You will not earn full points for this requirement if you make many of your postings together in a short period of time (at the beginning or the end of the term, for example). Those of you who have never used an e-mail list before will not need extensive experience to succeed in this portion of the class. I am happy to instruct you in the uses of such technology for the purposes of our course.

This electronic discussion encourages all students to explore topics in an informal, but highly public manner. In addition, it will broaden the scope of and provide more avenues for inquiry than our in-class discussion time allows. Through it, you will make postings on topics generated by yourself, by me, and by other students in our class. Posted topics, exercises, suggestions, and questions will be largely related to assigned materials, materials related to our topic but not on the syllabus, and larger concepts associated with the topic. Since your responses and discussion on this electronic forum may be used to stimulate or expand in-class discussion, it is important that you keep up-to-date with material posted on this electronic discussion list.

Analytical Papers (each 10% of total grade):

You will write two fully developed, analytical papers (5 pages minimum) using standard college essay structure. For both papers, you will come up with your own topic that examines some facet of the legacy of our medieval inheritance in contemporary culture as this relates to one or more work(s) we have read for class. To construct your topics, think about how an idea or theme presented in our readings is related to some contemporary idea or theme. For example, you might write a paper in which you examine how Dante's vision of Hell or Paradise is used in the speeches of one specific modern evangelical preacher. Other examples of possible paper topics that examine the legacy of our medieval inheritance might be how loyalty within a specific group you belong to is similar to the kind of loyalty expected of the warriors in *Beowulf*, or you might consider whether Chaucer's tales resemble modern TV sitcoms, or you might wish to explore whether Sir Gawain's quest is related to contemporary war movies.

Whatever you decide you write about, as with all college level analytical papers, your papers for this class are expected to go well beyond a simple overview or summary of your topics. Instead, your papers are required to analyze their material in terms of a specific, important, unique point you wish to make about the evidence in the texts. While an analytical paper may include a brief summary of a text (5-10 sentences on plot and background) for the readers' convenience, analytical papers are not book reports. Instead, they require you to examine critically evidence from the text(s) and formulate a particular view of the text(s) based on that evidence. In your papers, work to develop insights that are original, significant, and assist your reader to a stronger understanding of the material.

Since these are formal papers, they must use standard essay structure which includes: an introduction; supporting paragraphs; a conclusion; and correctly documented references in appropriate MLA format (see Policies #7). To be effective, each paper must focus its analysis by means of a strong, highly specific thesis statement supported and explained using examples from the texts. As with any college level analytical paper, the more specifically focused your topic is, the more effective the analysis is likely to be. In addition, understanding and incorporating the ideas in Thomson's *Critical Reasoning* and Harvey's *Nuts and Bolts of College Writing* will be crucial to the success of your papers, so review these books throughout the semester even after we have discussed them in class.

Consider as your audience for these papers a group of highly intelligent readers, such as your classmates, who are not experts in your subject but who have a general knowledge of your subject and want to learn something new about the material. Imagine also that you have to engage this audience enough to make them want to read your paper. Since such an audience does not have to read your paper, your writing will need to capture their attention and persuade them to view your topic differently.

Your analytical papers will be assessed for the success of the finished product (how well it meets the assignment, displays serious and significant thought, stands by itself without oral explanation, establishes and supports an appropriate logical structure, meets acceptable standards of written English, etc.). While you are free to incorporate material from secondary sources, I am more interested in seeing you explore your own ideas about the primary texts in depth, rather than in knowing you can properly regurgitate what someone else thinks. If you need help with your writing, I am happy to work with you as long as you talk with me well before the paper's due date.

Group Oral Presentation (10% of total grade):

During the first week of class, you will be assigned randomly to a group that will make a formal oral presentation to the class. The topics for these presentations are important works of medieval art, music, or technology. Your group oral presentations will provide your audience with a basic introduction to the place of your topic in western cultural history. At the end of your group's presentation, the audience should understand your topic well enough to be able to begin research for themselves. Focus your presentation on the following four areas:

1. Historical Background: Present the historical background of your topic, including all important factual details of dates, physical materials, places and people associated with your topic;
2. Summary/Description: Describe or summarize what your audience must know to understand the basic concepts of your topic. You will have been given some key words or ideas when you are assigned your topics that you will want to consider including in your presentation;
3. Legacy: Explain how your topic forms part of our medieval inheritance. In other words, present some ideas about how your group's topic is related to today's culture.
4. Visual Aids: Provide visual aids related to your topic to help your audience better visualize your subject.

Your group will have 20 minutes for its presentation with an additional 10 minutes for questions, for a maximum time limit of 30 minutes. Your presentation will be stopped if your group exceeds the maximum time of 30 minutes. Also, your classmates will be your primary audience for this presentation. Therefore, your group grade will be based primarily on anonymous evaluations made by your peers. They will provide written scores and comments that evaluate how well your presentation meets the four items listed above, the professionalism of your presentation style, and its overall effectiveness. While you will not turn in any written work when you make your presentation, you are expected to keep a copy of your own portions of the presentation to include in your Final Portfolio.

This assignment has been designed to help you develop your oral presentation skills, so make it extremely professional, useful, interesting, and all around GOOD! It is intended to give you practice and experience speaking before a group in a formal situation. This means you should dress up, stand when presenting your topic, and make eye contact with your audience (your classmates, not me!). It also means you should know your topic well enough to present your information using notes but without simply reading your presentation. Also, each presentation must reflect solid group activity and interaction. Since I expect all group members to work together to participate in the presentation, make sure each group member does not simply give a disconnected, mini-presentation of a portion of your topic. Somehow make the presentation reflect teamwork, rather than individual effort.

In addition, I challenge you to be imaginative and inventive. The more interesting and lively your group's presentation is, the more likely your presentation will make an effective impression on your audience. Plan your report carefully and practice it often as a group before presenting it to the class. For superior presentations that earn high points, the general rule is that you should practice your entire presentation together as a group at least three complete times. Also, make sure your group anticipates questions or problems. Beyond these guidelines, it is up to each group to determine how to present its topic.

For your presentation, you may provide your audience with any handouts you wish. I am happy to photocopy black-and-white handouts for you, if you give me an original at least one class before your presentation. Also, if you need special equipment to use for your presentation, (powerpoint-capable computer, slide projector, Internet access, etc.), tell me at least one week in advance so I can arrange this with the UHP office.

Creative Research Project (10% of total grade):

Early in the semester, you will be assigned a fictional character from a specific medieval time period, geographical area, and position in life. This character will be the basis for your creative research project. For this project, create a fictional diary or group of letters from your character's point of view. Research those areas of life and work that would have been important to someone like your character. Each character is specific enough that you should be able to find solid research material with a bit of creative digging. For example, if your character is a nun in the Bingen monastery in 1160, it would benefit you to research the life of the famous abbess of that monastery, Hildegard of Bingen, for background relevant to your topic. In your project, work to build a clear, carefully detailed picture of your character's life. However, while you can be as formal or informal in your style

as the character herself/himself would demand, you must remain historically accurate in presenting your project. Power's book, *Medieval People* may also give you some ideas about how to approach researching your character's life.

For the content of your project, make sure you incorporate the following:

1. Time and Events: Include some portion of the historical context that is most relevant to the life of your character as well as facts about the actual time in which your character lived;
2. Place and Setting: Give specific information on the important places and locations with which your character would have been familiar;
3. Culture and People: Establish the personal or professional concerns of your character's life by using details from your research about the ideas and interests of the culture in which your character lives. For example, if your character is an Irish slave who helped Leif Ericson sail his ship, you might want to include information on slavery in viking times and on how vikings navigated their ships; and
4. Explanatory Paper: As part of your project, you will also write a short explanatory paper (3-5 pages) that describes and explains the rationale for the choices you made, as well as the difficulties you addressed or overcame, in working with the research on your character. If you omit turning in this portion of the project, three points will be deducted from your score.

Apart from these content requirements, your project also must meet the following technical requirements:

1. Length: Your finished project must be at least 10 pages long, excluding your bibliography;
2. Sources: Your bibliography must include at least five different sources, formatted according to proper MLA style. One of these sources must be a journal article or article from an edited collection. At least three of your sources must be secondary sources and at least one must be a primary source. No more than two of the five required sources may be from the Internet (you may use more Internet sources, if your bibliography contains more than three other non-Internet sources). If you forget to include your bibliography, two points will automatically be deducted from your project's score; and
3. Research Documentation: Document the research you use to compose your project. After each historical fact or idea included in your project, insert parenthetical citations or endnotes. These citations or notes should be keyed to your bibliography at the end of your paper. If you forget to document your references, two points will automatically be deducted from your project's score.

Final Portfolio (20% of total grade):

For your Final Portfolio, you will be expected to compile copies of all your work for this class into a well-organized folder or binder along with additional assignments that require you to assess your performance in this class, improve on some of your work, and synthesize your thoughts on our overall course topic of our medieval inheritance. Later in the semester you will be given a detailed handout, with a specific breakdown of what you are expected to include in your Final Portfolio and how many points you earn for each section of the portfolio. For now, however, what follows is a brief summary of the contents to be included in your Final Portfolio:

1. Selected in-class exercises or assignments;
2. Selections from your electronic discussion postings;
3. A copy of your portion of your group's oral presentation;
4. Your original creative research project;
5. Original copies, with my comments, of your two analytical papers;
6. A revised version of one of your analytical papers or of either part of your creative project that substantially strengthens and improves its overall success;
7. A Course Synthesis Paper of 5 pages minimum. For this paper, re-read the course description, review your class notes, and write a paper synthesizing your thoughts on the importance of the medieval inheritance to contemporary culture. You are not required to include all of our texts in your synthesis paper, but most of them should play some part in your discussion. Be aware that a synthesis paper is also an analytical paper, which means it must incorporate the same elements as your analytical papers (see above) and must be focused on a strong, specific thesis statement. As with any college paper, your Synthesis Paper for this class must also include a bibliography of your sources presented in proper MLA citation style (see Policies #7).

POLICIES and SUGGESTIONS:

Grades and Absences

1. Although students usually consider me a tough grader, I honestly want you to learn and succeed in this course. Therefore, by following the guidelines here, you have ample opportunity to earn a passing grade if you put forth diligent effort. While only truly superior work will earn an A, work making sincere effort rarely earns lower than a CR.
2. If you miss class, informing me of your situation demonstrates professional courtesy and willingness to take your responsibility to the class seriously, which will count in your favor when I determine your participation score. However, I make no distinction between excused and unexcused absences. An absence is counted as an absence, regardless of the reason for it.
3. If you must miss class, you are responsible for acquiring notes from your classmates. In-class exercises may not be made up.
4. I do not automatically drop students who stop attending class. Therefore, you must take responsibility for dropping or withdrawing or be willing to accept the consequences.
5. Incompletes will be given only if you complete work through the 12th week with a passing grade.

Written Work

6. Papers, research projects, and final portfolios may be turned in one class session after the due date without a penalty. Work turned in more than a week late will not be accepted. No late presentations will be allowed.
7. All papers, research projects, and appropriate sections of final portfolios should follow these conventions:
 - Typed (12 point type in Times New Roman or something very similar), double-spaced, on white 8½" x 11" paper, 1" margins all around;
 - Your name, course title, and assignment on the top right of the first page above a centered, appropriate title (Paper #1, Synthesis Paper, Analytical Paper 1 are NOT appropriate titles!);
 - All pages should be numbered and stapled;
 - Sources must be documented according to the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*.
8. For your own protection, keep copies of all the work you turn in for a grade.
9. You must do your own work and should not, under any circumstances, let others use your work. If you copy from others or sources without acknowledging the sources, you are guilty of plagiarism. If you have someone else write assignments or allow another person to copy work, you are guilty of dishonest scholarship. In addition to risking being expelled from UNM, if you are found guilty of plagiarism or dishonest scholarship, you will receive a 0 for the assignment and probably a NC for the course.

Extra Credit

10. You may earn a maximum of three extra credit points toward your final score. Although other voluntary forms of work may benefit your learning, only extra credit work earned as follows will count toward your grade:
 - 1 point if you attend a third public lecture on an academic subject and write a 2-5 paragraph summary that you send over our electronic discussion list no later than one week after the lecture;
 - 1 point if you maintain perfect attendance throughout the semester (i.e., miss no classes at all!);
 - 1 point if you attend class on the day Course Evaluations are given. These will be given sometime during the last two weeks of class, but you will not know the exact date beforehand.

Special Circumstances

11. Students with disabilities or other unusual circumstances are encouraged to see me as early as possible concerning any special accommodations that need to be made in order for you to succeed in this class.
12. Under EXTREMELY extraordinary circumstances exceptions to the above policies may be made with the following conditions. You must be willing to discuss the circumstances with me in person and provide any written documentation I might require (doctor's statement, death certificate, etc.).

SYLLABUS (subject to change)

You are expected to read all assignments before class on the day they appear on the syllabus. Some of these readings are difficult and slow reading, even though they span a small number of pages. Because of this, I advise you to start your readings at least three days before we discuss it in class. For effective college-level reading, you should plan to read the assignment all the way through at least once and then thoroughly review it again the day before class. If you read assignments only the night before we discuss them in class, it is unlikely that you will have assimilated them as fully as is necessary for truly effective learning and class participation.

Due dates for graded work appear in **bold**. Page numbers in parentheses correspond to the texts ordered for this class, but may vary depending on the edition. EOMMP is an abbreviation for *Everyman and Other Miracle and Morality Plays*. Works followed by (ER) denotes texts available to you on the library's electronic reserves website, which may be accessed through the UNM library reserves webpage.

<u>Week 1</u>	Tues. 1/17/06 Thurs. 1/19/06	Introduction/Syllabus Backgrounds and Beginnings
<u>Week 2</u>	Tues. 1/24/06 Thurs. 1/26/06	<i>Beowulf</i> , Introduction to poem and Prologue (page ix-line 84) <i>Beowulf</i> , first part of poem until Beowulf returns to Geatland (lines 85-1887)
<u>Week 3</u>	Tues. 1/31/06 Thurs. 2/2/06	<i>Beowulf</i> , part of poem after Beowulf returns home to Geatland (lines 1888-end) The Legend of King Arthur (ER) and Introduction to <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> (pp. 13-24) Thomson, <i>Critical Reasoning</i> , Chapter 1 and 2 (pp. 1-76)
<u>Week 4</u>	Tues. 2/7/06 Thurs. 2/9/06	<i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> , Sections 1 and 2 (pp. 25-53) Thomson, <i>Critical Reasoning</i> , Chapter 3 and 4 (pp. 77-100) <i>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</i> , Sections 3 and 4 (pp. 53-88) Thomson, <i>Critical Reasoning</i> , Chapter 5 (pp. 101-140)
<u>Week 5</u>	Tues. 2/14/06 Thurs. 2/16/06	Harvey, <i>Nuts and Bolts of College Writing</i> : Introduction, Chapters 1-8 (pp. ix-85) Amping Up Your Writing: 7-minute Workshops Analytical Paper Workshop Bring complete draft of Analytical Paper 1 (2 points will be deducted from your final course grade if you do not bring a complete draft of your paper to this workshop)
<u>Week 6</u>	Tues. 2/21/06 Thurs. 2/23/06	Introduction de Pizan, <i>The Book of the City of Ladies</i> (pp. xvi-xxxvii) Analytical Paper 1 Due de Pizan, <i>The Book of the City of Ladies</i> (pp. 5-90)
<u>Week 7</u>	Tues. 2/28/06 Thurs. 3/2/06	de Pizan, <i>The Book of the City of Ladies</i> (pp. 91-240) Chaucer, <i>Selected Canterbury Tales</i> , Introductory Note and The Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale (pp. iii-iv and 103-35)
<u>Week 8</u>	Tues. 3/7/06 Thurs. 3/9/06	Chaucer, <i>Selected Canterbury Tales</i> , The Miller's Prologue and Tale (pp. 83-102) EOMMP, <i>Noah's Flood</i> (pp. 1-11) Analytical Paper 2 Due
<u>Week 9</u>	SPRING BREAK – No Classes	
<u>Week 10</u>	Tues. 3/21/06	Research Fundamentals 1 Complete Library Research Tutorial before class (ER)

	Thurs. 3/23/06	Power, <i>Medieval People</i> , Chapters 1-4 (pp. 1-95)
<u>Week 11</u>	Tues. 3/28/06	Power, <i>Medieval People</i> , Chapters 4-end (pp. 96-173)
	Thurs. 3/30/06	Group Presentation Workshop Have your presentation ready to give a trial run (2 points will be deducted from your final course grade if your group is not ready to present a trial run at this workshop)
<u>Week 12</u>	Tues. 4/4/06	Group 1 Presentation: The Bayeux Tapestry
		Group 2 Presentation: Troubadours and Trouveres
	Thurs. 4/6/06	Group 3 Presentation: Book of Hours (Les Tres Riches Heures)
		Group 4 Presentation: Gutenberg Bible
<u>Week 13</u>	Tues. 4/11/06	The Legend of Robin Hood (ER)
	Thurs. 4/13/06	Research Workshop Bring a working bibliography of at least 5 sources for your Creative Research Project (2 points will be deducted from your final course grade if you do not bring your bibliography to this workshop)
<u>Week 14</u>	Tues. 4/18/06	Dante, <i>The Divine Comedy</i> , Introduction and Inferno selections (pp. v-113) (Cantos 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 15, 17, 21, 24, 26, 30, 33, 34)
	Thurs. 4/20/06	Dante, <i>The Divine Comedy</i> , "Purgatorio selections" (pp. 114-203) (Cantos 1, 6, 7, 9, 11, 24, 25, 27, 28, 30)
<u>Week 15</u>	Tues. 4/25/06	Dante, <i>The Divine Comedy</i> , "Paradiso selections" (pp. 204-291) (Cantos 3, 10, 11, 17, 23, 27, 30, 31, 32, 33)
	Thurs. 4/27/06	Dante, continued Creative Research Project Due
<u>Week 16</u>	Tues. 5/2/06	EOMMP, <i>Everyman</i> (pp. 36-59)
	Thurs. 5/4/06	Wrap-up discussion Final Portfolio Due (extension Tuesday, 5/9, 12:00 noon)
	Fri. 5/5/06	12:00 midnight, deadline for electronic discussion postings

Finals Week – No Class and No Final Exam